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SCR 38, SR 35
URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
TO OBTAIN SINKHOLE SITES ON THE EWA PLAIN

SCR 38, SR 36
URGING THE NATURAL AREA RESERVES SYSTEM COMMISSION
TO COMPLETE ITS REVIEW OF SINKHOLES ON THE EWA PLAIN

Statement for Senate Committee on
Energy and Natural Resources
February 21, 1990

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SCR 38/SR 35 and SCR 38/SR 36 recognize the archaeological and zoological importance of the sink holes found near Barbers Point on the Ewa plain and request that the Natural Area Reserves System Commission complete its review and make their recommendations for preservation if warranted to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) and that the DLNR purchase or otherwise obtain title to those sites recommended for protection.

Our statement on these resolutions does not represent an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

The archaeological and zoological significance of these sink holes is correctly emphasized in the several "whereas" clauses. The development of Campbell Industrial Park, Barbers Point Deep Draft Harbor, West Lock Estates and other land uses in the Ewa plain have destroyed a major fraction of the sink holes. Hence it is imperative that the few remaining sites be protected as soon as possible.

These sink holes can be likened to the La Brea tar pits of California or the fossil remains protected at Dinosaur National Monument in Utah and Colorado. These sink holes are a unique fossil resource and of tremendous

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value to the State. In addition to the fossil bird remains, they also contain evidence of prehistoric Hawaiian occupations. The deposits may well provide evidence of interactions between the Hawaiians and the various bird species over time.

While we concur that it is necessary to identify the specific areas for protection as is being undertaken by the Natural Area Reserves Commission, it is our understanding that sufficient information now exists for decision making. Based on the present and likely future development pressures in this area, time is of the essence in designating areas to be protected. We strongly concur with the intent of these resolutions.